

The World.

ESTABLISHED BY JOSEPH PULITZER.
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ALWAYS "A NEW BUREAU"!

WHENEVER a society for the prevention of something or other gets busy in New York the first thing it does is to urge a new department of the city government.
At its inaugural meeting the Committee for the Prevention of Reckless Driving and Street Accidents started off with a proposal for a special municipal bureau to handle automobile traffic.
But why? Does anybody believe that the police, with traffic regulations, a license system and the co-operation of magistrates and courts to back them, are not capable of dealing with the speed problem?

Why create new officials to do somebody else's work?
Directly anything goes wrong hereabouts somebody wants to open new city offices with a salaried manager and a staff of secretaries.

The habit of assisting departments of the city government to do work that properly belongs to them, if carried too far, easily begets confusion, laxity and weakened responsibility.

Instead of spending money to multiply chiefs and staffs the city had much better figure how to get the highest degree of efficiency from those it already has.

Reckless motor driving is a serious menace and must be curbed.

But the best results will be obtained, not by creating new bureaus but by seeing to it that the city gets from police and magistrates the vigilance and co-operation that belong to departments which already exist.

Do your resolving early.

AS IT ADDS UP.

TEN BILLION DOLLARS' worth of farm products is the record for 1913—in spite of drought and discouragements the most successful farming year in the history of the United States.

The high cost of living is still with us, but we are sure, but the more we study it the more hopeful we are of finding ways to get the better of it.

We have at last tackled with courage and success the Tariff and the Currency—two spectres that have scared us since we were born.

Government and business have never been more friendly and communicative toward each other.

We have been and shall continue to be wisely withheld from war. The country is all here.

Why worry?

How long since you've heard yourself sing? Try your voice to-night.

"KNOW THYSELF."

IF YOU wish to have your physical machinery overhauled by experts who will tell you where it needs oil or repairs, the Life Extension Institute, just incorporated at Albany, will soon be ready to do the job for a small fee. If you hold a life insurance policy the cost will be nothing at all.

If there is something wrong with your gear the Institute will furnish a diagram of readjustment and your family physician can do the rest.

With ex-President Taft, the Ambassador to Great Britain and Dr. Wiley on the Board of Directors there seems no reason to doubt the good faith of this corporation when it announces that it is in business for health and humanity. Two-thirds of any profits it may earn beyond five per cent. of the capital invested are to be spent in extending the public usefulness of the Institute.

With each succeeding year there is less and less excuse for any man to remain ignorant of his bodily condition or of the things he can do to make his life a long, useful and happy one.

Twenty-five hundred years ago Solon summed up his wisdom in the counsel, "Know thyself"—advice which the Greeks put in gold letters over the portico of their most sacred temple.

To-day the best efforts of the best minds are spent in helping us to follow it.

And many of them!

Letters From the People

Cost and Economy.

To the Editor of The Evening World:
I note a query asking "Is it cheaper to run a truck with a team of horses than it is to run an automobile truck?" Is it cheaper to run a stage coach or a railway train, a rowboat or an 800-foot ocean liner? Is it cheaper to burn a candle or an incense burner? The answer to each of these is obvious. But we do not condemn the railway train, the steamship or the electric light for this reason. To burn a single candle is much cheaper than to burn an incense burner, but in order to get the light from candles several hundred of them would have to be burned in order to equal that given by an incense burner. In which case the cost would be many times greater than the cost of burning an incense burner. It is cheaper to operate a rowboat than a steamship, but in order to transport a cargo of merchandise (that is taken across the ocean via the motor truck) the cost of the motor truck is much greater than the cost of the steamship. If the querist will ask "Is it cheaper to haul goods with the horse than with the motor truck under average conditions?" he will receive a considerably different answer. M. C. H.

Anti-Cigarette Boys.

To the Editor of The Evening World:
I read that a man was arrested for blowing smoke in a policeman's face.

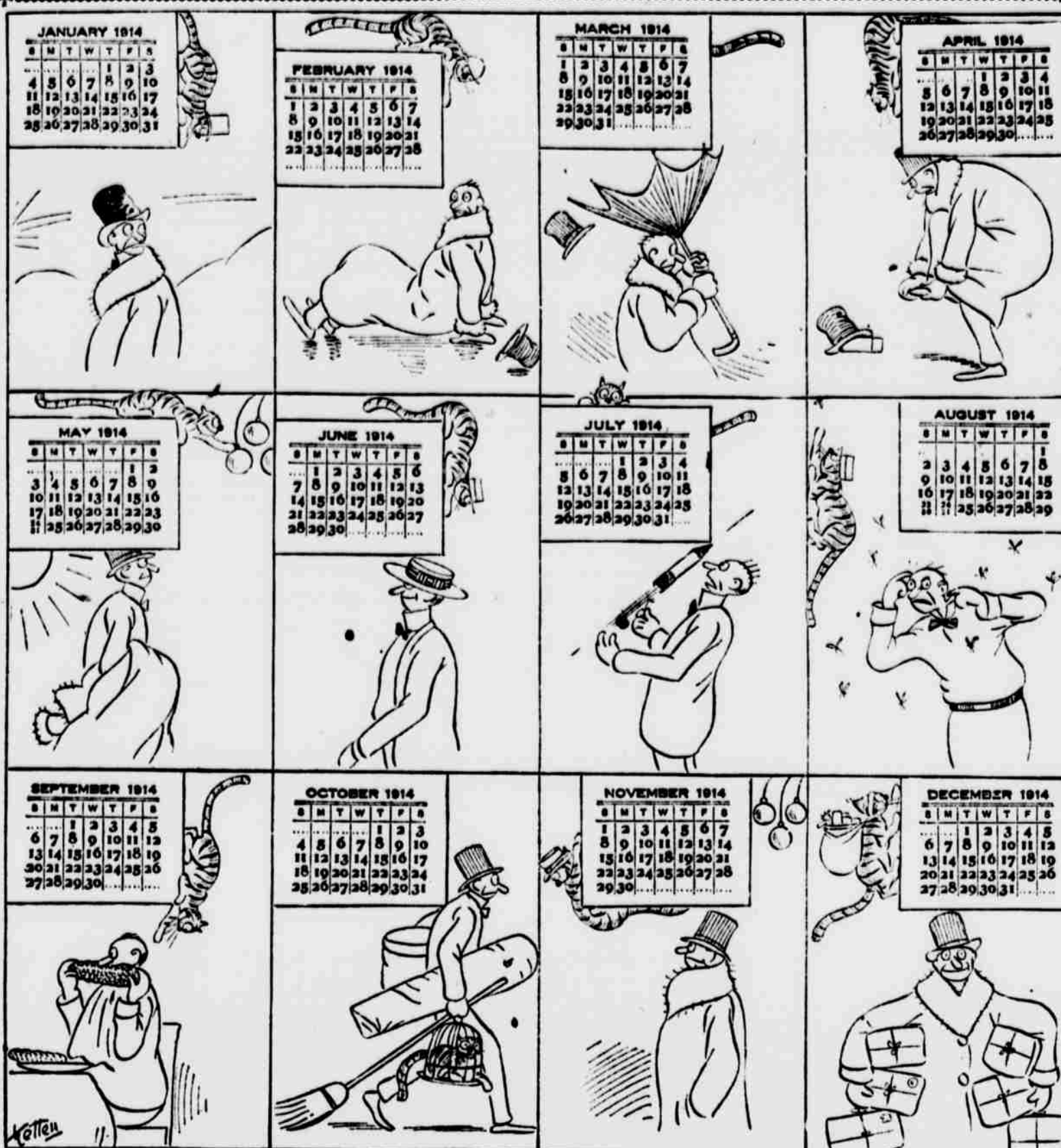
I am thirteen years of age and attend Public School No. 155. I have noticed that about one man out of ten has a cigar, pipe or cigarette in his mouth. People passing through the street do not inhale pure air, but only air mixed with the foul fumes of tobacco. An organization has been formed in this city called the Anti-Cigarette League of America. Its object is to keep children (and grown-ups) from smoking. It does a great deal of good and hopes to have a roll call of 10,000 boys in New York. HUGO GREENFIELD, Member of Anti-Cigarette League of America.

The Pet Dog.
To the Editor of The Evening World:
Apropos of the article entitled "Dogs in the City" in your issue of December 24th, and to that section of the article showing the record of deaths due to the rabid pet dog, the question arises, "Why the pet dog?" In a large city like New York, where the population is so dense, it is not only a nuisance to the owners and their neighbors and fellow-citizens, but is inhuman to the animals themselves to keep them under such conditions. B. S. BOWDISH.

None Universally Observed.
To the Editor of The Evening World:
Has the United States any legal holidays during the year?

Happy New Year!

By Maurice Kettner



The Jarr Family.

Mr. Jarr is at last in Society!
Yes, He'd Much Rather Be in Jail

Mr. Jarr's "affair" in honor of the Misses Cackleberry, visiting from Philadelphia, the marriage was at its height.
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Reflections of a Bachelor Girl.

By Helen Rowland.
The hand that rocks the cradle is seldom seen making gestures in a suffrage meeting.—Columbia State.

Just one more drink is always responsible for one more "drunk."—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Headline reads, "Spaniards Expelled from Mexico Appeal to Hearst." Now from what paper do you suppose we got that? Each reader has one guess.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

King Alfonso, says a Madrid despatch, smokes twenty-four cigarettes an hour. He must be saving up coupons for a piano.—Boston Transcript.

One of the late discoveries is that of a London scientist, who says moonlight rays have a softening effect on the brain. May be that accounts for so much love-making by moonlight.—Toledo Blade.

A German blacksmith is taking a leading role in grand opera over there. This is not the first time there have been blacksmiths in grand opera.—Milwaukee Sentinel.

The President of Switzerland receives only \$100 a year; still, even so he is not an income, one might live high in the Alps.—Boston Transcript.

A man may "dare to do right," but he would never dare to acknowledge the fact to his bachelor friends.

The wages of love is small.

Little Causes Of Big Wars.

By Albert Payson Terhune

No. 32—A Strip of "Debatable Ground" That Caused Our Mexican War.

IN Southern Texas is a strip of land, lying between the Nueces River and the Rio Grande. And over its possession was waged a war—a war that cost more in money and lives than fifty times the value of the land itself.

Pioneers from the United States had drifted southwestward across the Mexican border and had settled in the region that is now known as Texas. They had a hearty contempt for the Mexican masters of Texas, a contempt they took no great pains to hide. The Mexicans resented the invasion and the Americans' attitude toward them.

There was one clash after another. A cordial hatred sprang up between the two races and war followed—a murderous frontier war, starred with massacres and with all manner of atrocities. The outcome of the conflict was that the American pioneers, under Sam Houston, thrashed the Mexicans, drove them out of the territory and formed the "Republic of Texas." Then Houston managed to get Texas annexed to the United States.

This is not the place nor time to discuss the rights and wrongs of snatching several hundred thousand square miles of territory from Mexico and of adding it to the United States. But at once the action bred a new and a different kind of trouble. The slavery and anti-slavery factions have been at enmity ever since the new State, the standstillers denounced its annexation and Mexico protested loudly.

Yet there seemed every chance that the high-handed seizure might not involve our country in war. Though troops were massed near the frontier, President Polk said in his message to Congress on Dec. 2, 1845, that the peace between the United States and Mexico remained undisturbed. Then came the boundary squabble.

Texas extended only as far south as the Nueces River, but the Texans, having acquired the land-sealing habit, claimed also the Comanche district, which lay between the Nueces and the Rio Grande. Says Higginson:

"The claim to the region between the rivers had no standing in law and but little in fact."

But President Polk enforced it by sending Gen. Zachary Taylor, with 4,000 men, across the Nueces and as far south as the Rio Grande itself, thus invading with an armed force the domain supposedly belonging to a peaceful neighbor.

The local Mexican commandant ordered Taylor to clear out. Taylor refused. There was a skirmish. Sixteen Americans were killed or wounded. Taylor promptly crossed the Rio Grande, invaded Mexico and captured the city of Matamoros.

Congress backed this move by declaring war on Mexico. President Polk quickly assured the nation that Mexico had "invaded our territory and shed American blood upon American soil" and that "war exists, notwithstanding all our efforts to avoid it."

Zachary Taylor, with his little army, plunged straight into the heart of Mexico, thrashing Mexican hosts that greatly outnumbered his own and capturing Mexican strongholds that were thought impregnable.

He was a wonder, this grim old Indian fighter whom Polk had sent to Mexico as a cat's paw to be the butt of any unpopularity the war might cause. (Taylor was a Whig and Polk a Democrat.) And now Taylor's victories made him a national hero. Polk tried to redeem his own error by sending Gen. Scott, a fellow Democrat, down to take charge of the war and by stripping Taylor of most of his army to swell that of Scott.

In spite of the handicap Taylor later won the battle of Buena Vista, defeating a Mexican force nearly five times as large as his. (Incidentally securing his own election as next President of the United States.) Scott too won several battles, and in a few months Mexico was thoroughly beaten.

By the terms of the peace treaty Mexico ceded among other things, to the United States (for \$15,000,000) California and New Mexico, nearly 900,000 square miles of territory. Thus, the strip of "debatable ground," costly investment though it had been, at last paid big dividends.

The Mexican war had other effects too. It trained certain young soldiers for mighty roles they were later to play in the national drama. Among the young soldiers who received their baptism of fire in the clash with Mexico were Grant, Lee and Jefferson Davis.

New Year's Oddities.

YIPPIES celebrate New Year's on the first full moon after St. John's Day, which falls on Dec. 27.

The Russian New Year will be celebrated on Jan. 21, which marks the beginning of the year 7223 A. M.

The "Old Lady of Threadneedle Street," the Bank of England, celebrates its birthday on New Year's Day, having been opened Jan. 1, 1694.

The Iroquois Indians still cling to their old method of reckoning time, and will celebrate later in January the beginning of the New Year 464 of the Iroquois Confederacy.

The Chinese, having adopted the modern calendar, will celebrate New Year's Day on the orthodox date, but they still cling to their primitive notion that all debts must be paid on or before New Year's Eve—a custom not likely to find universal favor among American debtors.

In eliminating the New Year leaves, President Wilson changes a custom that dates from the days of Washington, who started it.

The ancient Egyptians, Persians, Chaldeans, Phoenicians, Syrians and Carthaginians began their year at the autumnal equinox, about Sept. 23.

Among the ancient Greeks New Year's Day was first celebrated on Dec. 22, and later on June 22.

The Latin Christian nations once had seven different New Year's Days—Jan. 1, March 1, March 25, Dec. 25, Easter, and two variable dates.

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The twenty-second of September was the New Year's Day in the French revolutionary calendar.

The Mohammedan New Year is not fixed, but retrogrades through the different seasons of the solar year, the last observance having been on Nov. 30, which marked the beginning of the year 1332 (dating from Mohammed's "hijrah" to Medina).

In Scotland, New Year's Day and the day before are called "daff" or "daffy" days, when all persons were once supposed to be privileged to drink a "wee dram" more than was good for them.

Up to a century ago it was the privilege of the men in Scotch towns to kick every girl caught on the streets on the first day of the year, but the custom is now tabooed.

The ancient Persians exchanged eggs on their New Year's Day (Sept. 2), but that was long before eggs became so valuable.

One of the most beautiful of American observances of the day is the tournament of roses which is held annually in Pasadena, Cal.

It is estimated that New York consumes not less than a quarter of a million dollars' worth of champagne every New Year eve and morning.

According to an old superstition, the opening of an umbrella in the house on New Year's Day means bad luck all year, the overturning of a chair is a presage of illness, and the dropping of a knife, fork or spoon means that you will be hungry all year.

The year 1914 will be born in New Zealand, for on March 25, Dec. 25, Easter, and two variable dates.

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